REVIEWS.

A SYSTEM OF PRACTICAL THERAPEUTICS. Edited by HOBART AMORY HARE, M.D., Professor of Therapeutics and Materia Medica in the Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia; assisted by WALTER CHRYSTIE, M.D., late Physician to St. Clement's Hospital, and Instructor in Physical Diagnosis in the University of Pennsylvania. Vol. I. Pp. viii., 1052. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co., 1891.

THE first volume of this *System of Practical Therapeutics* treats of—General Therapeutic Considerations; Prescription-writing; Remedial Measures Other than Drugs; Preventive Medicine; Diathetic Diseases and Diseases of Nutrition. The object of this and the volumes that are to follow is to provide the practitioner of medicine with reliable and helpful information concerning the best and most recent methods of curing disease.

General Therapeutic Considerations, being practically an introduction to the work, were wisely intrusted to the able pen of Professor Horatio C. Wood. Although the exact scope of his contribution might be difficult to determine, yet his eighteen-page paper is a good exposition of therapeutic methods, dosage, and rules for the combination of drugs. He discusses the four possible methods of therapeutics: 1, empiricism; 2, treatment by some law of symptoms; 3, scientific therapeutics; 4, a combination of two or more of these three plans. Scientific therapeutics should always consider the cause and course of the disease, the method of death, the basal conditions which underlie the symptoms, and the remedial forces at hand. As our ignorance, more often in the region of pathology than in that of therapeusis, hampers us, a method which combines science and empiricism is the one that must be used. He treats of the question of dosage and the combining of drugs in a way that appeals to every practical physician who hopes to improve his work by greater scientific accuracy.

Professor Joseph P. Remington occupies eighty pages with a carefully prepared paper on "Prescription-writing and the Combination of Drugs." Although there is considerable material that is elementary, better suited to a text-book for students—and we presume that it is not for them but for physicians that this book is written—yet there is much that is of great value, because it is accurately stated. The *fac-similes* of prescriptions, although previously published, should be a forcible object-lesson to lazy, careless, or ignorant practitioners.

Remedial Measures Other than Drugs are discussed in six papers, covering about four hundred pages. The paper on "Electro-Therapeutics," by the veteran, Dr. A. D. Rockwell, is written in the author's well-known style. He explains fully the subject of current differentiation, dosage, and methods of electrical application. The use of electricity in the treatment of nervous diseases is quite satisfactory, while its use in gynæcology and obstetrics is hardly equal to the work that has been done by several prominent electricians. The subject of "Cataphoresis" is one that is exciting considerable attention, and a full discussion on this point would have been timely. The author deserves much commendation in that he has not allowed himself to be led into making extravagant claims for a valuable agent.

The "Rest-Cure for Neurasthenia and Hysteria" is the subject of a carefully prepared paper by Dr. John K. Mitchell. Although nothing new is presented, yet it gives a clear and concise statement of the way in which this method is to be carried out.

Dr. Benjamin Lee has profusely illustrated his paper upon "Swedish Movements and Massage," basing his work upon that of Ling and his followers. The diseases enumerated are as varied as the explanations advanced for the improvement that has been remarked after the employment of these methods. The paper is encumbered with a somewhat formidable nomenclature.

"General Exercise" is the subject of a well-written article by Dr. Edward Mussey Hartwell, in which its physiology is stated. This article, taken in connection with the last, gives a very comprehensive view of these so closely connected subjects that in the reading we have noticed a repetition of the same statement by the other writer.

The section devoted to "Climate" was wisely intrusted to Mr. S. S. Edwin Solly, who has devoted so much time to this subject. He has made a very readable contribution and one particularly adapted to the use of the American physician. The classification adopted is as good as any, while the practical deductions from his observations—the indications for a change of climate—are warranted by the facts, and contrast very strongly with the extravagant statements so often indulged in by untraveled writers.

Dr. Simon Baruch writes an exhaustive paper upon "Hydrotherapy and Mineral Springs." There is evidence of painstaking research, and in the modern work one finds that the papers of thirty years ago have been levied upon. Considerable of this section has already appeared within the past few years in current literature, the more extensive use of water as a remedial agent having been urged with all the powers of persuasion possessed by the author. Yet we cannot agree with him that hydrotherapy has not, as yet, received due recognition in this country, for during many years there have been numerous institutions in which hydriatic methods have achieved as much success as could be expected, for the hopes of their proprietors have demanded that no theory remain untested in practice and that no appliance should exist without being used. As a commercial venture it has been employed by men of intelligence and education. Water for cleanliness is essential, and the methods that are credited to the author, to raise the standard of cleanliness among the poorer population, are commendable, but these methods are hygienic rather than therapeutic, as the word is usually understood. This part of the paper is open to criticism, because in a system of therapeutics we justly expect a calm, impartial statement, which may be a guide to the practising physician, and not a special plea for measures that have been already in use for many years. As an illustration, we may cite the method of treating typhoid fever which is known under the name of Brand, and which has been the subject of many discussions, and whose published results have been very justly questioned. For when an essential of success is the commencement of treatment at a time when few physicians feel absolutely certain of the diagnosis, and the fact that it meets but a limited number of indications, extravagant laudation only hastens the time when the reaction comes, and it is likely to be esteemed below its true worth. We feel that American medical practitioners are not so ignorant upon the subject of hydrotherapy as our author would have us believe, and that they appreciate the true value of these measures and use them when fitting occasion presents itself. At these times this paper will be useful, for the technique is fully explained. The subject of mineral springs is one that has not received the attention it deserves, for our springs are numerous and equal in value to those of Europe that are so much lauded. The difficulty seems to consist in finding a physician of wide clinical experience, extensive reading, and judicial mind, who has opportunities for personal observation and who will give to the profession the results of his long and painstaking study. The report in question is brief, leaving an impression in the mind of the reviewer that the writer was far more interested in the use of pure water at home than in the influences of various mineral waters—together with freedom from work, with change of scene and interest, and a regulated diet, at a point where all these resources could be placed under contribution.

Preventive Medicine occupies nearly two hundred pages, and the first paper, by Dr. Henry B. Baker, on "General Sanitation," is excellent in its conciseness and in the incisive logic of undoubted facts. Dr. George E. Sternberg handles the subject of "Disinfection" in a manner that is at once scientific and fully abreast of the times, and this paper on a subject not ordinarily interesting was found to be so full of practical suggestions that it commands attention. Although the author proves his right to speak *ex cathedrâ* by evidence of personal experimental work that is found on every page, yet he adds a brief but comprehensive bibliography. Dr. J. William White, in "Antisepsis and Asepsis," preaches the gospel of surgical cleanliness, and indeed writes so fully that even the surgeon need not have reference to special works, and so clearly and logically that the average practitioner may thoroughly learn his lesson therein. The section is concluded by an extensive paper by Dr. I. Burney Yeo, on "Nutrition and Foods," including the treatment of "Obesity and Leanness." In this paper we are pleased to note a singular and remarkable absence of evidences of hobbies. The paper is scientific, practical, and not based on only a single idea. The application, in directing special foods in particular diseases, is carefully written, based on accepted theory, and will appeal to the physician as he seeks to obtain for his patient the best possible nourishment for one suffering from that particular disease. The fairness of the author and his extensive reading have made this contribution a valuable one.

In taking up the five papers of Diathetic Diseases and Diseases of Nutrition, "Tuberculosis," by Dr. Solomon Solis-Cohen, is by far the most valuable paper in this volume. It is encyclopædic in character, just in criticism of the work of others, and giving due acknowledgment, intensely practical, and, indeed, an accurate portrayal of the state of our knowledge of the treatment of tuberculosis in the closing days of 1891. Written with a faith in the curability of the lesions of tuberculosis, by one whose field of observation has not been bounded by the walls of the dead-house or the laboratory, by one who is entitled to generalize from the results of broad observation of clinical work, this paper represents the best of American practice. Believing that in defective nutrition we have the fundamental factor in the production of tuberculous diseases, he enters into a scientific explanation of the causation of hypotrophy. Prophylaxis in avoidance of infection, food, treatment of sputa, reinforcement of vital energy of the patient in choosing his residence, selecting his clothing, regulating his diet, rest, and exercise, using water and air, all receive due attention. The medicinal treatment of tuberculosis, in these latter days of therapeutic nihilism, thanks to the clinicians who have based their practical work in medicine upon the findings of necropsies, has been considered of little importance; here, however, it receives due consideration. Therapeutic nihilism is fast passing away under the influence of men who, like our author, believe that the chief aim of a physician is to relieve suffering, and that all other departments of medicine are useful only so far as they determine therapeutic indications. We do not find here a simple catalogue of remedies but an intelligent criticism of their value, with frequent practical suggestions for the various conditions that may arise and complications that may occur. The lesions of special structures are taken up, and here, especially, we find a great number and variety of resources at our command. One cannot master this work without feeling that even tuberculosis, formerly considered refractory, now has become amenable to treatment.

Dr. Walter Chrystie presents a short but satisfactory paper on "Scrofulosis and Rhachitis," in which he gives a careful summary of our best and most exact knowledge upon these subjects.

"Acute and Chronic Articular Rheumatism, Rheumatoid Arthritis, and Gout," is the somewhat complex title of a far too brief paper by Dr. James Stewart. While this article is a practical one, the author prefers to confine himself to a few remedies that have stood the test of time and experience rather than to discuss a larger number.

Thanks to improved dietetics, scurvy is now a very rare disease, but the brief paper by Dr. John B. Hamilton is well worthy of a place in this work.

The paper with which this volume closes is by Dr. Frederick A. Packard upon the subject of "Diabetes Mellitus." Although the author does not use, as a basis for determining the indications of treatment, the elaborate classifications in vogue in Europe, yet he gives an excellent view of the well ascertained facts and accepted methods of treatment. The paper is eminently practical; the remedies are selected more on account of the results which come from use rather than from theoretical considerations.

A careful reading of this volume convinces us that it is fully the equal in scholarship of the other systems that have been published during these past few years. It certainly is a valuable work for the practising physician. That it is the most complete presentation of the subject that can be made at the present time is by no means certain. The difference in value of the papers is painfully apparent. Several are diffuse; a few but partially cover their field. A complete bibliography at the end, with references in the body of each paper, would have been acceptable to the accurate physician who wishes to consult original papers, and a more elaborate index would add to the value of the work. We await the appearance of the remaining volumes with interest, and believe that they will deserve a place in the library of the men who are the bone and sinew of the profession. The volume is a model of the bookmaker's skill. R. W. W.

A Manual of Venereal Diseases. Being an Epitome of the most approved Treatment. By Everett M. Culver, A.M., M.D., Pathologist and Assistant Surgeon to the Manhattan Hospital, etc., and James R. Hayden, M.D., Chief of Venereal Department, Vanderbilt Clinic, etc. 8vo, pp. 294, with 33 illustrations. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co., 1891.

This live and timely little volume treats of Gonorrhœa and its Complications, Chancroid, and Syphilis in a most entertaining style not uncommon in the smaller medical books of the day, and which, while at times bordering upon raciness or flippancy, yet is refreshing and does not prevent the conveyance of solid and useful instruction when originating from a competent pen.

Little space is devoted to theoretical considerations. The work is essentially practical, being written in the belief that "as a nation we do not care for the ultimate rootlets of knowledge," but that "we wish to grasp the convergent point where the rays centre; we desire that truth that will do us the most good in the very shortest time." Without entering upon a discussion of this conviction (for fear, perhaps, that we might be compelled to acknowledge its truth), we must credit the authors with having produced a really needed work which should be read by everyone who may treat venereal disorders, and are confident that the more closely its teachings are followed the less will be that dreadful sum of unnecessary suffering which has resulted from maltreatment of venereal diseases. The wholesome conservatism of the book is almost surprising in this age of radicalism and supposed precision, and is doubly valuable and significant as coming from men who have grown up under teachings so diverse from their own.

The sections treating of Gonorrhœa and its Complications, comprising the first one hundred and sixty-six pages, are written by Dr. Culver with pleasing individuality as to both style and handling of his subject. Here are sketched the symptoms, course, termination, complications, treatment, and ethical considerations of gonorrhœa. The gonococcus is practically acknowledged to be the sole cause of gonorrhœa, but we are also told that it is our duty to teach that "there is no reason why a man may not contract a discharge from his honest bedfellow." All abortive and radical treatment of gonorrhœa, also local treatment before the chronic stages are reached, is strongly condemned. Conservatism is the watchword throughout. Treatment down to most minute details is amply set forth.

Stricture of the urethra is defined as "a pathological condition of connective-tissue growth sufficient to interfere with the normal functions of the genito-urinary tract," and the general treatment advocated therefor is very gradual dilatation, *never* internal urethrotomy, except in